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ABSTRACT

This document presents a Consultation Platform formed by seven major networks to maximize impact of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations on development of the Communication on Lifelong Learning. Section 2 is a summary of platform conclusions structured according to these six key messages in the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning: new basic skills for all; more investment in human resources; innovation in teaching and learning; valuing learning; rethinking guidance and counseling; and bringing learning closer to home. These three additional conclusions are set forth: followup and monitoring, research and dissemination, and partnerships and the role of NGOs and civil society. Section 3 provides the responses and proposals of these networks: Corporate Social Responsibility Europe; The European Association for the Education of Adults; The European Forum of Vocational Education and Training; The European University Association; The European Vocational Training Association; and Solidar/The Platform of European Social NGOs. Section 4 presents the key recommendations

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from the six workshops based on the key messages. Section 5 presents a description of activities and contact information for the Consultation Platform networks. (YLB)

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EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Education and Culture
Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs

Supporting Document to the Communication from the Commission
Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality

# SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF THE FEEDBACK FROM CIVIL SOCIETY AS PART OF THE CONSULTATION ON THE COMMISSION'S MEMORANDUM ON LIFELONG LEARNING

Prepared jointly by
a platform of civil society organisations

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CE045274

Making lifelong learning a reality - Consultation of civil society

LIFELONG LEARNING

# "Focus on Lifelong Learning"

## A REVIEW OF THE REPORTS FROM CIVIL SOCIETY ON THE CONSULTATION PROCESS ON THE COMMISSION'S MEMORANDUM ON LIFELONG LEARNING

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| Corporate Social Responsibility Europe | The European University Association |
| The European Association for the Education of Adults | The European Vocational Training Association |
| The European Forum of Vocational Education and Training | Solidar Platform of European Social NGO's |

The Youth Forum



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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In spring 2001, seven major networks took the initiative to form a Consultation Platform. They are Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR Europe), European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA), European Forum for Vocational Education and Training (EfVET), European University Association (EUA), European Vocational Training Association (EVTA) and Solidar in association with European Youth Forum. The co-ordination of the Consultation Platform was ensured by EVTA, lead partner in the project.

The purpose of the Consultation Platform was to maximise the impact of NGOs and civil society organisations on the development of the Communication on Lifelong Learning.

All of these European networks have experience that identifies them as natural partners for a European consultation on lifelong learning. Together they cover a wide range of fields from general education to vocational training, from youth till elderly, from employed to unemployed, encompassing various specific target groups from both the demand side and the supply side of lifelong learning. With the cooperation from their member organisations all over Europe they were able to relay field experience and expertise to the context of policy development.

As a part of the consultation process each of these European networks stimulated their member organisations to participate actively in national consultations and ensure feedback with regards to the key messages for lifelong learning identified in the Memorandum. Each organisation also appointed its own expert to process the feedback from the member organisations into a network report, which was submitted to the European Commission in July 2001.

The consultation process was characterized by a dynamic interaction and purposeful discussions between the different networks on the key messages in the Memorandum, but also drawing attention to missing messages. The most important points for action, raised during the consultation process, are shared by all of the networks and therefore presented in the second section of this publication.

Lifelong learning should be a European activity, inspired by common values, even if interpreted in different ways throughout the continent. The Consultation Platform welcomed the opportunity to be part of a larger consultation process and the fact that different NGOs and civil society organisations were given a prominent role in the drafting of a Communication on how to implement lifelong learning in reality.

During the consultation process the different networks received an extensive input of good practices from their member organisations. The Consultation Platform endeavours to further process and analyse of this material, in order have this important and useful information disseminated to interested parties.

A conference "Making lifelong learning a reality – consultation of civil society" was held in September 2001 and it included workshops on the six key messages in the Memorandum. The Consultation Platform's networks and experts moderated the workshops. The elaboration in the workshops was enforced by lively discussion and interaction between the participants and led to several concrete proposals and ideas for the Communication on Lifelong Learning. They are presented in the fourth section of this brochure.

Ylva Källman and Magali CarlierThe EVTA Project Management

For more information about the networks involved in the consultation process, see section five.

## 2. THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE CONSULTATION PLATFORM

*This summary of conclusions for the Communication on Lifelong Learning is the outcome of the consultation process and it is coherent input from the networks on the points for action, when implementing lifelong learning in reality.*

The conclusions are structured according to the six key messages in the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning. The opinion of the Consultation Platform is that the key messages in the Memorandum did not sufficiently cover important issues on the purposes of learning, mechanisms for learning and the support for learning. These issues are covered under the heading Additional conclusions. It is also the opinion of the Consultation Platform that issues such as research and follow-up refer to all of the key messages and should be regarded as transversal issues.

### 2.1. Key Message 1: New basic skills for all

*Objective: Guarantee universal and continuing access to learning for gaining and renewing the skills needed for sustained participation in the knowledge society*

*Lifelong learning is about combating social exclusion*

Social exclusion is about people not participating in society for different kinds of reasons: disability, age racism, gender, social class etc. The purpose of combating social exclusion is therefore very simple: to help us all participate in shaping our own futures and to improve our quality of life.

Social inclusion is about giving all individuals equal opportunities to be a part of a local community and to play an active role in making it better. Having access to learning opportunities is not enough; people also require guidance and support to develop their own learning plans in the context of participating in a community and in society. Lifelong learning can be a way of forming pathways to social inclusion. For the individual, learning is of course also a question of acquiring or improving skills to cope with the challenges of life in general, but in a social context learning has wider benefits.

The individual and social benefits of learning need to be stressed more. Lifelong learning can be regarded as shared responsibility of individuals, organisations, regions, countries and Europe as a whole.

*Lifelong learning is about promoting active citizenship*

Lifelong learning promotes active citizenship, but little attention has so far been given to what learning for active citizenship means and how it can be developed and achieved. Many opinions underline the link between lifelong learning and an establishment of a European citizenship and democracy.

By reaching a common definition of active citizenship – not only European citizenship - we would also be able to define the context in which it can be achieved. The promotion of learning in connection with cultural diversity and creativity should also be expressed in co-operation with other different bodies on a regional, national and European level.

Active citizenship is about social responsibility and solidarity and NGOs and civil society could therefore be one of the key actors in providing lifelong learning as a part of an active citizenship process.

### 2.2. Key Message 2: More investment in human resources

*Objective: Visibly raise levels of investment in human resources in order to place priority on Europe's most important asset – its people*

*Lifelong learning is about investing money and investing in time and equity*

The different investors in lifelong learning: the learners, the learning providers (educational and training institutions, non-governmental organisations), employers, governments and international organisations should pay as much attention to better and more equitable systems of investment in human resources as to more investment.

An investment can be monitored so that its potential can be fully achieved at the end of the investment process and any changes brought to the mechanism before that point. This is where attention to the quality of the learning being provided and to the recognition of the wider purposes of learning, as well as to the relevance of the investment, would be important. Investment in human resources and equipment should take into account the variety of learning providers and the diversity of learners.

The investment should focus on those furthest from learning opportunities as well as in the objectives of learning, which are least likely to be supported by other sectors. When investing in lifelong learning in a Member State, there should be investment to provide a range of varied opportunities to encourage participation and to provide support for different kinds of learners. There should also be competitive benchmarking between member states to compare public and private levels of investment across countries on a European level.

### 2.3. Key Message 3: Innovation in teaching and learning

*Objective: Develop effective teaching and learning methods and contexts for the continuum of lifelong and life wide learning*

*Lifelong learning is about new innovations and structures*

We do not need to invent the wheel once again, but we can join forces to find new and innovative ways to use it. New structures of opportunity within education and training systems and between the different providers of education and training opportunities can give us a whole new way of using tools, methods and mechanisms to implement lifelong learning and to learn with and from each other.

Being innovative in lifelong learning is putting the learner in the centre of the process and relating the learning opportunities to the learner's interests, needs and community by using different methods. Opportunities need to be developed to meet the needs of the learner and provide sufficient support and variety to encourage participation.

Innovation in teaching and learning has so far been developed in two primary directions: general modernisation of the systems providing flexibility through ICT and specific measures for vulnerable and disadvantaged target groups.

The information we receive through projects on innovative teaching and learning methods should be available to all in databases or information banks. These databases could also contribute to disseminating products for their evaluation or improvement and produce general benchmarking methods and an ideas databank.

### 2.4. Key Message 4: Valuing learning

*Objective: Significantly improve the ways in which learning participation and outcomes are understood and appreciated, particularly non-formal and informal learning*

*Lifelong learning is about valuing the new roles of the different actors in the field of lifelong learning*

The roles of the different actors in the field of lifelong learning is changing from a more restricted setting of tasks and areas of responsibility and knowledge to a more interactive and continuously developing process between the learner and the learning facilitators (teachers, trainers, companies, institutions, organisations etc.) in different learning environments. The learner of today should be given the opportunity to play an active role in his or her own learning process, aiming for the most suitable way to learn in the most optimal learning environment.

The learner needs opportunities to learn, tools for learning and a wide variety of support not only during the learning process, but also throughout life. The providers of learning should assist the learner throughout the learning process and along his or her learning paths and this work needs to be flexible and well connected with other actors in the society.

To create and develop the tools and methods for this work we should establish learning partnerships on regional and national level, which can be expanded to European level.

### 2.5. Key Message 5: Rethinking guidance and counselling

*Objective: Ensure that everyone can easily access good quality information and advice about learning opportunities throughout Europe and throughout their lives*

*Lifelong learning is about supporting the learner*

The European dimension of guidance is still missing. Rethinking guidance and counselling needs a supporting new philosophy. Lifelong learning has to be accompanied by lifelong guidance, since the need for guidance and counselling recurs throughout life. Guidance and counselling must also be developed towards more holistic ways and styles of provision and it must be able to address the wide range of needs and demands as well as a variety of publics. The approach must be to put the person in need of guidance and counselling in the centre of interests and development. Guidance and counselling should be provided in open local services available to people, as and when they need them.

Investments often focus on infrastructure and sometimes forget the counsellors and the skills they need to inform, advise and guide citizens in their educational, vocational and life choices. The knowledge and experience of peer group members from the work place or the local society could also be used to support the learner in his or her learning process.

There are already now many examples of good innovative practice, which should be identified, evaluated and disseminated on a transnational basis. More co-operation between different actors and on different levels is needed, e.g. to develop principles of quality for guidance and counselling.

### 2.6. Key Message 6: Bringing learning closer to home

*Objective: Provide lifelong learning opportunities as close to learners as possible, in their own communities and supported through ICT-based facilities wherever appropriate*

*Lifelong learning is about providing opportunities for everybody to learn*

When providing opportunities to learn close to home, we need to remember that it should be close in the sense that it is "attainable" but also close in the sense that it is "relevant" by enabling people to see how learning can improve the quality of life.

There are existing examples of providing lifelong learning opportunities as close to the learner as possible. They have been delivered through partnerships and co-operation between local authorities, companies, education and training institutions NGOs etc., often involving ICT.

Internet and databases also provide opportunities for people to think globally, while they act locally. Access to the Internet is of course important, but a lifelong learning culture is not only about computers, but also about the socialisation of people as individuals and as members of a society. This means that all learning needs to be embedded in the network of families, the local community and its associations of citizens.

## ADDITIONAL CONCLUSIONS

### 2.7 Additional conclusion: Follow up and monitoring

*Lifelong learning is about follow-up and monitoring*

There has to be a stronger emphasis on the follow-up and monitoring of different projects on both a national and a European level. The Communication on Lifelong Learning should be supported by the necessary financial means on the one hand but also by the necessary evaluation, monitoring and follow-up structures of projects, which can help, enhance the quality of the projects.

There is often little or no coordination between programmes and projects funded, nor is there proper follow-up or evaluation on the results. We need to improve the quality of monitoring to prevent mismatches and to promote dissemination of good practices.

### 2.8. Additional conclusion: Research and dissemination

*Lifelong learning is about research and dissemination*

Research in projects on the social and economic benefits of different ways of investing in lifelong learning is needed and we suggest that research be carried out on different levels: European, national, region, organisation and individual.

Teaching in lifelong learning contexts has to be connected to research into new teaching methods. There needs to be further research in the learning needs as well. Co-operation and an exchange of researchers and other practitioners will bring better understanding of the contexts and probably increase the interest and ability to take part in other research efforts.

There should be an even stronger effort to disseminate results from projects and to create e.g. databases or virtual libraries where projects are being analysed and entered after meeting a set of criteria.

**2.9. Additional conclusion: Partnership and the role of NGOs and civil society**

*Lifelong learning is about partnership and valuing the role of NGOs and civil society*

Lifelong learning can best be delivered through partnership. There has to be interaction and better co-ordination between the different policy levels for learning in general and lifelong learning in particular and we need to approach this work from a long-term perspective. We agree with the Memorandum that the key to success is to build on a sense of shared responsibility for lifelong learning among all the key actors. A partnership approach focusing on raising the skills level of individuals and the local community can have a key influence in promoting local economic development.

Learning partnerships between different providers of education and training, associations, enterprises etc. can best be realised when these different actors recognise and value each others contribution to lifelong and life wide learning.

During the consultation process the different networks involved, worked together and joined forces to find the best solutions to create and develop ideas and proposals for the implementation of lifelong learning. This partnership experience has reflected the advantage of cooperation between NGOs and civil society organisations to provide extensive and up-to-date field input to European consultations.

We suggest that similar kind of Consultation Platforms and partnership based cooperation, between NGOs and civil society as well as governmental bodies and other key actors, will be established on a more permanent basis and on different levels.

The NGOs and civil society organisations are confident that the consultation process and the points for action will be reflected in the Communication on Lifelong Learning. NGOs and civil society can be key actors when providing lifelong learning and the interest shown by the networks and their member organisations clearly reflects the role of the NGOs and civil society as natural partners in the development and implementation of lifelong learning in reality.

They also have the means to find synergies between other NGOs and partners. They could also be a key actor, when developing projects in partnerships with other NGOs, companies, trade unions etc. NGOs and civil society should have a more prominent role in the process of providing an overall view, also at policy level and setting targets (a national action plan for lifelong learning).

## 3. THE NETWORK RESPONSE TO THE MEMORANDUM ON LIFELONG LEARNING

The results of the consultation process that was undertaken in each of the networks are presented here. A copy of the full report produced by each network association is available via the association's website.

### 3.1. Summary of the Response of Corporate Social Responsibility Europe (CSR EUROPE)

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**Lifelong Learning for an Entrepreneurial and Inclusive Europe**

***"To make Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth, with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion"*** New strategic goal for Europe by 2010, set by the European Heads of State at the Lisbon Summit in March 2000. Implementing this new strategic goal has major implications not the least in the field of education. If education is to respond to the challenges of the knowledge society, it can no longer consist simply of securing enough skills and qualifications for the individual to gain work. The emphasis now has to be on developing both capacity and motivation to carry on learning through life and adapt constantly to new changes and challenges.

Human capital has become **one the key assets of companies' competitiveness in the knowledge society.** Moreover learning and lifelong learning are seen as ways to build a productive and satisfying life within which people can use their full potential as professionals and active citizens.
Lifelong learning is the key to employability, competitiveness, adaptability and active citizenship, which interact with one another very closely. Everyone should have equal opportunities to adjust to the demands of social and economic change and participate actively in the shaping of Europe's future.

Lifelong learning can no longer be seen as one aspect of education and training; it must become the guiding principle for provision and participation across the full continuum of learning contexts. The new focus is on lifelong – during the whole duration of life - and life-wide learning - building on all the learning experiences – formal, non-formal and informal - an individual will come across during his or her professional and personal life. CSR Europe members and National Partner Organisations has actively participated in the consultation process set up by the European Commission inviting major organisations of the civil society, business and government bodies to provide input for a Communication on Lifelong Learning to be implemented across Europe in the nearest future.

**CSR Europe and Lifelong Learning**

Education is a top priority for CSR Europe. In their **Proposals for Action for an Entrepreneurial and Inclusive Europe**, submitted to the Lisbon Summit of March 2000, CSR Europe business' leaders stated their strong belief in education business partnerships as a means of promoting personal and social development, economic growth and productivity. Specifically, they stressed key elements which are also at the core of the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning: developing the learners' basic capabilities and skills, facilitating transition from education to employment, and developing models of partnerships for continuous learning.

As a concrete follow up to the Proposals for Action, CSR Europe launched its new **Programme on "Education, Training and Lifelong Learning: the role of business towards a knowledge society for all".** The mission of the programme is to engage business in innovative education and training partnerships in order to promote a wider access to knowledge and lifelong learning as the key driving force of social inclusion and economic competitiveness. Its main objectives are a) to stimulate the exchange of experiences and approaches to partnership across Europe b) to support companies in the development of pilot projects on specific themes at local, national and transnational level 3) to act as a broker between the business, education and public sectors develop to increase their mutual understanding and pave the way for closer cooperation.

CSR Europe has recently launched a 5-year **European Business Campaign 2005 on Corporate Social Responsibility**, which will culminate in a European year on CSR in 2004. One of the objectives of this Campaign is to energise the dialogue and partnership between business and stakeholders, including those involved in education and training. Therefore, participating in the consultation on lifelong learning with other key European associations in the field of education is a strong component of the spirit of the Campaign.

**Business Best Practices around Key Issues of Lifelong Learning**

The EU consultation on Lifelong Learning was centred around six key messages: new basic skills for all, more investment in human resources, innovation in teaching and learning, valuing learning, rethinking guidance and counselling and bringing learning closer to home.

Related to these six messages, CSR Europe members stressed the importance of issues like building a knowledge society for all, developing a culture of communication and learning, expanding leadership competencies and investing in partnerships.

**1. Acquiring new basic skills for all**

Basic skills are the competencies needed to work and live in the knowledge society. Numeracy, literacy, IT skills, foreign languages, entrepreneurship, technological culture, the ability to work in teams and personal skills are examples of key basic skills. The acquisition of basic skills by the current and future workforce is a major concern for the business community, which supports the development of skills of employees, but also of people outside the company, through co-operation with schools and training centres.

Companies are involved in a wide range of projects aimed at providing and improving basic skills. These initiatives enable formal education systems to respond more accurately to business needs and therefore increase overall employability. Such projects often start with regular meeting between teachers and employers and lead to a joint agenda for action: including teacher placements in the company and reverse placements of employers in schools, business related curriculum development projects, student work experience and mentoring of individual teachers including head teachers by business people.

Special attention is often given to disadvantaged groups (i.e. women after career breaks, immigrants, disabled, long-term unemployed, older workers) to facilitate their acquisition of basic skills and to the up dating of teachers' and trainers' competencies, as key facilitators for lifelong learning.

**2. Investing in human resources**

Employees' training and education is part of the mission statement of many companies. Learning is linked to career development plans, and companies use different ways to support their human resources development. Flexible working schedules are common to motivate lifelong learning, and in some cases career breaks are also possible. Companies often co-finance individual learning accounts or learning budgets for their employees.

Most large companies have their own training centre, or 'academy'. Specific training schemes and education awards within the company enable staff to acquire additional degrees or certificates. Some projects focus on training for employees requiring specific support, such as disabled persons or redundant employees. Several companies have projects investing in human resources in the local community. This is seen as a way to build solid relations with the community and help it to flourish, as well as an important investment in future potential employees. Many of these projects address the needs of disadvantaged groups such as long term unemployed, school drop-outs, and youngsters coming from difficult family situations, to improve their basic skills' level, enhance their employability and in some cases help them start their own business.

Most projects are promoted in co-operation with local public authorities, in the framework of EU funded initiatives, or through fund-raising activities of employees with matched funding by the company.

**3. Innovating teaching and learning**

Companies have traditionally shown considerable innovation in teaching and learning through a wide range of initiatives for employees. Many companies apply ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) to develop innovative learning packages accessible to employees at any time and from any location, enabling them to become more autonomous and responsible learners. Several web-based training packages have been developed through co-operation between companies and universities or other training centres. Mobility of employees across countries, work shadowing, team work, the acquisition of a qualification on the job, are all innovative educational approaches put into practice by many companies. In some cases the training developed within a company is later accredited by universities and integrated into their courses. Some companies co-operate actively with universities and training institutes to develop new curricula.

Some companies also put expertise and other resources at the disposal of educational institutions and other community bodies. One of the benefits for companies is that involvement by their employees in such activities does contribute to their personal development and actually becomes a cost-effective alternative to more formal training. Job rotation systems, dual learning systems and sandwich course training create learning opportunities for people outside companies, often within disadvantaged groups.

**4.Valuing learning**

Valuing learning is a key element in motivating individuals to keep updating and upgrading their skills. Learning opportunities within a company are part of the benefits package offered by the company to its personnel. Tangible rewards resulting from lifelong learning are better career opportunities and salaries.

Valuing learning is enhanced when training and education in companies lead to qualifications recognised by the formal education systems. Documenting learning of employees through the use of professional portfolios or competence maps are useful means to enhance valuing education and favour mobility of employees across Europe.

**5. Rethinking guidance and counselling**

Companies provide guidance and counselling both to their employees for career development and to groups in the local community. For instance, to facilitate the transition from school to working life, companies provide counselling to students for future career options, including guidance for CV preparation and work interviews. In some cases, larger companies offer support to enhance entrepreneurial skills of employees and other individuals who intend to set up their own company.

Companies use various tools as support to counselling and guidance. CSR Europe is currently developing an on-line self-assessment tool, the "Business Roadmap on Lifelong Learning", which aims to helping companies to map their projects in the field of lifelong learning, assess their performance against best practice and improve their educational policies making use of tailor-made guidelines.

**6. Bringing learning closer to home**

Bringing learning closer to home is perceived in different ways. The focus is on bringing learning as close as possible to the learner, be it at home or at work. Many initiatives set up by companies in recent years to bring learning closer to the learner are supported by new technologies, allowing employees to access innovative learning packages at any time and from any location.

Companies often co-operate with local authorities, educational and other associations to develop learning communities, a major innovative learning model promoting active learning. Such partnerships are based on the recognition of mutual needs to raise standards, modernise the curriculum and widen the access to excluded groups. Thanks to the use of ICT, which connect the different actors of learning communities together in a virtual learning network, learning is brought closer to learners and learners closer to one another.

**CSR Europe proposals for Action to the European Commission and national public authorities**

- The Commission is invited to play a role of catalyst at European level bringing together and consulting regularly key actors involved in Lifelong Learning, such as business, governments, representatives of educational bodies.
- This could be done through the setting up of a Forum, aimed at promoting the establishment of Business and Education partnerships, the exchange of innovative practices on Education and Training as well as updates on the implementation of the Communication on Lifelong Learning.
- The Commission is invited to define clearer criteria for the selection, monitoring and assessment of European Education Projects. Selection criteria should give particular attention to innovative aspects, the potential impact of the project, and the sustainability of the project activities once EU funding ceases.
- The Commission is invited to stimulate the active participation of companies – both large companies and SME's – in European projects within the three main programmes in the field of education (Socrates), training (Leonardo da Vinci) and Youth. For that, it should seek to simplify both the administrative and financial procedures of European programmes and improve their transparency and communication.
- The Commission is invited to further develop quantitative and qualitative indicators for evaluating the impact of education and training policies and activities.
- The Commission is invited to promote the dissemination of examples of good practice and successful partnerships in the field of lifelong learning, supporting the existing on-line database such as the CSR Europe Resource Centre. To this aim, the Commission is also invited to support the organisation of seminars and conferences bringing together key reference actors on Lifelong Learning across Europe.
- The Commission is invited to support European initiatives, which enhance the creation of learning communities or help to spread and implement the concept of the learning community across Europe.
- The Commission is invited to set up initiatives promoting the role of teachers, and trainers as learning facilitators.
- The Commission is invited to continue its support to initiatives promoting the integration of ICT in teaching and training methods, such as the E-learning initiative.
- The Commission is invited to promote Education projects targeting disadvantaged groups and communities in order to improve their basic skills and enhance social cohesion.
- The Commission is invited to set up an inter-service working group which would facilitate the co-ordination of all initiatives in the field of Education, training and research. Closer co-operation especially between DG Education Culture and Youth and DG Employment and Social affairs is much welcomed.
- In the framework of the European Business Campaign 2005 on Corporate Social Responsibility, the Commission is invited to support all the activities around lifelong learning that will be promoted as well as the European Year on CSR in 2004, of which lifelong learning will be a key issue.
- National governments are invited to act as catalysts for all reference actors of lifelong learning at national level, promoting debate between the different stakeholders on the developments of national education and training policies.
- In particular, governments can stimulate the debate between companies and public authorities around the incentives, which can be given to those companies investing in innovative actions in education and training.
- National, regional or local authorities are invited to promote the creation of learning communities involving different partners– business, authorities, social partners, educational institutions, etc.
- National governments are invited to include in their annual National Action Plan implementing the European Guidelines on Employment examples of projects supporting employability and adaptability of the workforce.

**Conclusions for the CSR Europe report**

Promoting Lifelong Learning is a concrete way for companies to put into practice their corporate social responsibility and contribute to making Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. The different initiatives promoted by CSR Europe members reflect their determination to help reach the 2010 strategic goal set by the Lisbon Summit in March 2000.

In this context, key elements to be developed in the future include:

- promoting the message about Lifelong Learning to all European citizens and businesses,
- increased and better Education Business Partnerships
- the transfer and cross fertilisation of diverse, successful models of partnerships
- ensuring that what is happening at national government level is properly co-ordinated at European level.

Lifelong Learning will be a key component of the European Year on CSR in 2004. This will provide an excellent opportunity for the business community to show its contribution to the follow up of the European Commission's Communication on Lifelong Learning and Green Paper on Corporate.

Yves Beernaert
Expert for CSR Europe

## 3.2 Summary of the Response of the European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)

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**Introduction**

The EAEA consulted widely on the Memorandum and received responses from NGO networks working in the non-formal adult learning sectors from 17 European countries.

The Commission's initiative was welcomed and the six objectives were supported. However the EAEA felt that the Memorandum failed to give sufficient recognition to;

- The role that NGOs play in the provision of informal and non - formal learning, particularly the contribution they make to the development of innovative approaches, which engage non-traditional learners.
- The wider benefits of learning; that is those not directly associated with the needs of the labour market, but which are concerned with citizenship and social cohesion.
- The learning divide and the needs of those excluded from opportunities.

The EAEA recommended a number of actions for each key objective. These included those listed below.

**New Basic Skills for All**

**EAEA Proposals**

1. Priority should be given to the 'old' basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The needs of adults to acquire these skills should be identified; promotional campaigns mounted and innovatory approaches adopted that involve NGOs and the learners themselves.
2. 'New' basic skills should include learning for personal, social and democratic enhancement.
3. The means to provide a right of access to learning for all should include paid educational leave, National Insurance schemes and support for learners with caring responsibilities. National Governments have the responsibility to provide comprehensive structures of opportunities, which involve a variety of stakeholders, including NGOs.
4. The reasons for non-participation in lifelong learning should be the subject of transnational qualitative and quantitative research. This should include examination of the barriers, which deter particular groups from involvement.
5. Good practice in successfully engaging hard to reach groups should be identified, evaluated and disseminated.

**More Investment in Human resources**

**EAEA Proposals**

1. The Social Partners should be encouraged by the Commission and National Governments to reach agreements to increase investment in lifelong learning.
2. Public investment levels should be increased in line with GDP.
3. There should be greater equity in investment and priority should be given to groups who have received the fewest learning opportunities.
4. NGOs should be treated as crucial learning partners and receive ring fenced funding to enable them to meet the needs of hard to reach groups.
5. Short term funding will not overcome long-term problems. Consideration should be given to providing resources for both short and longer-term projects.

6. Regeneration budgets, including those from the ESF, should include resources for citizenship education.

**Innovation in Teaching and Learning**

**EAEA Proposals**

1. ICT materials should be evaluated and developed through a European quality benchmarking system
2. Teacher training should be reviewed in the light of new needs and demands, including the use of ICT as a learning tool.
3. New types of teachers and mentors from the community (including older people), Trade Unions and welfare and care sectors should be encouraged and their training needs identified
4. Research should be undertaken into the measurement and development of quality indicators for non-formal and informal learning.

**Valuing Learning**

**EAEA Proposals**

1. A transnational study should be undertaken on the wider social and economic benefits of learning.
2. Promotional campaigns such as adult learner's weeks should be supported to illustrate the diversity of learners, learning opportunities and the benefits of learning for individuals and enterprises.
3. Accreditation of Prior and Experiential Learning (APEL) systems that exist in different countries and sectors should be evaluated with NGO involvement. The development of a European-wide APEL system will require the involvement of the providers of non-formal leaning opportunities who can take an active role and act as advocates for non-traditional learners.
4. Consideration should be given to developing a common European format for individual portfolios that demonstrate skills, knowledge and experiences.
5. Existing European qualifications should be given a higher profile through information campaigns.
6. A European task group, which includes NGO representatives, should assess the future needs for accredited learning, including the recognition of qualifications gained in third countries.

**Rethinking Guidance and Counselling**

**EAEA Proposals**

1. Good practice in the field needs to be identified, evaluated and disseminated.
2. New approaches, including the use of peer group members, mobile advice centres and partnerships between employers and NGOs should be explored and piloted.

**Bringing Learning closer to home**

**EAEA Proposals**

1. A study of existing local learning centres, which examines the diversity of provision, client groups, methods, management and stakeholders, should be undertaken.
2. Needs analyses should be an essential step in establishing new local learning centres. Local NGOs should be provided with resources to carry these out.
3. ICT can be a useful tool for learning and a motivating factor, but social and learning support systems also need to be established at local level, if learners are to gain full benefit and access wider opportunities.

The EAEAs response also drew attention to the 'missing messages', which included the need to explore and develop the relationship between lifelong learning and democracy and combating social exclusion, racism and xenophobia.

**The EAEA made additional proposals for the action plan including;**

1. The need for the development of an holistic European Lifelong Learning policy which recognises and gives value to the broader purposes of learning, including economic, social, community and personal development.
2. Strengthening and benefiting from the role of NGOs in lifelong learning by providing core funding for a European network.
3. Changing European funding systems to allow NGOs to receive a fairer share and make a greater contribution to addressing the needs of the learning poor.
4. Joining up European policies, programmes and approaches which relate to lifelong learning, including those for employment, social inclusion, enlargement, equal opportunities, combating discrimination, regeneration etc.
5. New directives and policy initiatives including European guidelines, targets and National Action Plans and the right of access to learning.
6. Establishing a European Institute of Lifelong Learning, which would have the capacity to undertake research, identify good practice and implement effective dissemination strategies.

Sue Waddington
Expert for EAEA

### 3.3 Summary of the Response of the European Forum for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (EfVET)

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**Introduction**

The NGO Consultation Platform represents the Civil Society opinion throughout Europe on Life Long Learning. EfVET, as the leading Vocational Education and Training practitioners Network in Europe contributes with its view to the consultation process on the EU Memorandum for Lifelong Learning.

The opinions and comments of EfVET members expressed the idea of a new European Society facing challenging times as it moves toward a knowledge based and information society. The information age and global society within which we live is demanding new and innovative approaches to Vocational Education and Training Institutions to ensure that people can contribute to the development of society in its widest sense. Learning will play a pivotal role in meeting individual expectations throughout life. The contributions member opinions to the Memorandum for Lifelong Learning and the European Union desire to offer close approaches to our practical viewpoint will greatly enhance the 'action planning ' process.

EfVET members have considerable experience in developing creative and innovative solutions to stimulate learning, both formal and informal, traditional and non - traditional, flexible and individual. Effective best practices expressed in relation to the six key messages brings a practical perspective with a view to contributing to the wider development of Communications on Lifelong Learning for implementation and embedding lifelong learning opportunities all over Europe.

**Key Message 1: New basic skills**

To guarantee universal and continuing access to learning for gaining and renewing the skills needed for sustained participation in the knowledge society is seen from Efvet members as the key to increase employment in Europe. Permanent co-operation between companies and colleges would be essential. A European forecast-system which focuses on emerging competences needed in working life would be an effective way to monitor and meet new emerging skills.

To develop new skills, colleges ought to develop flexible curricula, which will be reviewed annually and restructured at colleges from the reports of sector experts by providing additional resources in key areas, and rationalise units of study within the current curriculum.

Furthermore, the methodological approach to the teaching and learning changes. A greater level of integration of disciplines should take place, especially the ability to co-operate horizontally using IT. Mentoring is a key point: a stronger assistance before, during and after the training process can help the citizens to closely monitor their personal and professional development.

The New Basic Skills to be included suggested are the so called transversal competences that comprise IT skills and the development of interpersonal skills and social attitudes.

Two strategies for priority areas for action are: For young citizens - responsibility has to be taken by the educational system, to ensure IT skill acquisition within the normal curriculum; on the adult side, providing convenient access and technical assistance on new technologies within local communities.

**Key Message 2: More investment in human resources**

Investment should be increased in two directions: Firstly, investment to encourage active workers to participate in Lifelong Learning and secondly; investment for those who are not working and those excluded from the educational system.

To encourage further training governments and employers should make funding available for their employees to access learning within their career structures, which place value on lifelong learning. Measures to ensure time and flexibility for taking part in lifelong learning are key factors. The success of the process is guaranteed when employees can study at any time, progressively, depending on their work and personal conditions.

The structural funds for disadvantaged target groups should promote Local Learning Centres in social communities. It also would support staff costs, establish computer equipment or Learning Centres in non traditional environments, promote the one stop shop offering advice and guidance and implementing complementary activities, such as information campaigns to raise awareness, guidance and technical assistance while accessing the learning centres.

**Key Message 3: Innovation in teaching and learning**

Innovation in the new architecture of Education and Learning means strengthening the social skills of teacher and students compared to technical skills. Methods are individual orientated, which tend to be flexible and self-directed in shape and form. Students ought to take greater responsibility of their learning process.

The teacher has the role of a tutor/mentor; it is changing from being the sage on the stage to the guide on the side. To guarantee the competences of trainers, a compulsory requirement to give an official accreditation might be recognised at EU Level. A new type of teachers who are active workers is increasing. There should also be an agreement between the Enterprise and the Educational and Training institutions to give support to employers when they want to arrange more time for the employees to develop this side of their profession: to train other workers in the areas in which they are specialised.

With the help of transnational co-operation and exchange the researchers may also come in contact with practitioners they otherwise would never meet. Transnational Training the Trainers programs could also be used for this purpose and also twinning with other towns at educational level in Europe.

Materials development and use of ICT: Co-operation between developers, companies and educational experts is necessary to produce quality learning material and resources. Quality Accreditation on a pan European level implemented in different EU-countries with a classification system to categorise the learning materials are required.

For those who are excluded from education and training or who may not have the possibility to access to computers other innovative opportunities as interactive television and multimedia shall be investigated.

Priority at European level might be collaborative projects focused on specific industry sectors. The context for the learning has to be similar to the work environment. To monitor and analyse the outcomes a first step might be to analyse the good practices that have been already carried out and to set up a Data Bank Library on a server that might be accessible to all the educational agents in Europe. The maintenance and updating of information must be carried out by appointed and credible institutions.

**Key Message 4: Valuing learning**

It is relevant to promote Vocational Qualifications for adults at National and European level created from the information coming from companies and the labour market.

To focus on individual portfolio, it is suggested to develop an "officially approved portfolio" where the individual might add documents providing the acquisition of specific experience in a certain context. A Credit System for non-formal learning might also address this but care will need to be taken not to create too formal a structure in its operation.

For the action plan the Efvet members suggested to establish progression routes, promote career and guidance assistance, to make framework guidelines, and to promote networks and co-operation in practice from local national and European boards.

**Key Message 5: Rethinking guidance and counselling**

New generations of practitioners are higher qualified and share a wider understanding of modern methodologies. For this type of practitioners the use of new technologies for accessing career and guidance services on the Internet, which is open to all age groups in the community, and within organisations is successfully accepted. With this service it will be possible to provide information about education and training in different countries. Furthermore, to promote local/national initiatives as well as European Networks, the practitioners in this field should harmonise their activities and methodologies. It would be considered a priority to fund projects to establish European standards for the provision of guidance and counselling.

There exists an important target group, which has more experience but less background knowledge. This type of practitioners will be one of the critical factors for the implementation of new technologies in career and guidance services. Professional development programmes with short theory sessions and some practical assignments related to the work to be carried out on the workplace combined with self-assessment would be quite successful as in-service training, combined with a good qualification framework.

The guidance and counselling practitioners themselves ought to be trained on communication skills to be aware of their body language and the verbal communication for different target groups. Quality of service requires a National Qualifications for Guidance and Counselling practitioners along with a quality management system for monitoring their effectiveness using agreed performance criteria such as client satisfaction.

**Key Message 6: Bringing learning closer to home**

A new philosophy is developing in Europe: The Multi-purpose Local Learning Centres. It is a new way of understanding the training system, and a new way of designing education programmes. Nevertheless, there are difficulties in formal learning. Obstacles come for some specific groups. Needs of children, young people, adults differ so much that it is not possible in practice to make the learning centre equally favourable to all these age groups.

An idea to consider might be to bring specific training areas to the leisure spaces of each target. Community education, training and youth programmes should support projects to develop more on-line pilot projects, new projects on learning support that is based on student needs, problems and development, common projects to the benefit of small communities, promotion of partnerships between schools and colleges to develop learning centres in the community and co-operation with industry.

Best practices and good experiences might be implemented at local level giving a chance to the partnership between education and training providers with youth clubs and associations, companies and others. To decentralise and implement partnership based strategies there must be incentives like financial support to encourage access to and co-operation between networks in Europe.

Generosa Cerviño San Martin

Expert for EfVET

### 3.4. Summary of the Results of the European University Association (EUA) Consultation

The university should be a central actor in a European strategy for lifelong learning. European higher education institutions accept lifelong learning as their collective responsibility, but faced with pressure from international organisations, governments, employers and individuals to provide more learning opportunities, individual institutions must be able to decide what each will do and with which resources.

Higher education institutions experience increasing competition - for students, for staff, for research, for influence and for funding. It is this heightened competitive situation that spurred ministers of education to sign in 1998 the Sorbonne Declaration and in 1999 the Bologna Declaration, the most significant political initiative at European level affecting higher education today.

The Bologna Declaration proposes a new architecture of learning structures. If implemented, universities should be able to deliver lifelong learning in a more flexible way. By suggesting that the first-level (the bachelor's) should reflect the knowledge and competencies acquired rather than the years of study, the declaration brings higher education closer to other sectors of education and training in the debate about recognising learning.

The ministers who signed the Bologna Declaration also want to achieve "a more complete and far-reaching Europe". Citizenship as a purpose of learning should be made more explicit in the Commission's lifelong learning strategy. Lifelong learning can be a political response to a wide range of questions, but the universities welcome that the concept looks less exclusively economically driven.

The Bologna Declaration and the Memorandum call for action based on the premise that governments are responsible for national education and training systems. But, the implementation of national and European policy takes place in a local context. EUA requests that the Commission reinforce in its Communication on Lifelong Learning the role of the higher education institutions as partners in any European lifelong learning strategy.

**The Six Key Messages of the Memorandum**

EUA members expressed doubt about the emphasis in the Memorandum on the individual. It is only when the individual is able to interact with the learning system - and *vice-versa* - that there will be individual benefit and collective benefit. Lifelong learning should be a social affair.

Individuals, even when very motivated to learn, find it difficult to articulate their learning plans and to elaborate and finance them, especially if they are aiming at a qualification awarded only at the end of a long study period. The Memorandum should recognise that individuals need help to construct learning paths, in particular.

**Key Message 1: Guarantee universal access to learning for obtaining and updating skills**

Higher education institutions have a key contribution to make to the process of defining skills to be acquired. This process has already started in cooperation with employers, but it is important that the skills are for citizenship as much as for employability.

Special skills are needed when the citizen or employee wishes to be mobile, like better foreign languages, or intercultural communication. Then, as more people are professionally mobile, employers will need to be able to evaluate their skills and compare them across different contexts.

Apart from helping to define the skills to be acquired by learners, higher education institutions should assess which skills they can develop. While the institutions cannot guarantee universal access to learning, they can facilitate access, when they have the means and when they are willing to do more to draw in learners. The challenge in all European countries is to take learning opportunities to non traditional participants in education and training.

**Key Message 2: Raise investment in human resources for lifelong learning**

It is essential for governments to invest in training the teachers and the trainers for all stages of learning, in informal and non-formal as well as in formal education. Governments could help make teaching careers more attractive. This would involve in addition to competitive salaries the improvement of staffing levels in some areas. The higher education sector offers an interesting laboratory for experimentation. As many professors approach retirement, a big turnover in teachers is foreseen. There is an opportunity to define new teaching profiles and skills.

Who should pay for lifelong learning? Some people are willing to pay for learning – most often those who have benefited from formal education at quite a high level. It is necessary to differentiate between those who have an income from a job and can pay and those who cannot. It is also necessary to identify the motivated and the non-motivated learners (independently of economic power).

Several countries are reflecting on schemes to help motivate and/or fund the learner: individual learning accounts or career development loans, incentives to learning providers and to companies in the form of special funds or fiscal deductions. EUA endorses the idea for a research project on the social and economic benefits of different ways of investing in lifelong learning.

**Key message 3: Develop teaching and learning methods for lifelong learning**

Teaching in lifelong learning contexts has to be tied closely to research into new teaching methods. There is a great amount of experimentation with using information and communication technologies (ICT) in European higher education institutions, sometimes to improve the on-campus learning experience, at other times to deliver distance learning. In this context, there is evidence of efforts to develop new teaching and learning methods.

**Key Message 4: Improve the appreciation of learning, especially non formal and informal**

The Memorandum is a welcome attempt to bridge the divide between the different parts of national systems of education and training and to broaden the parameters of a discussion about learning and the learning society. Building bridges across different sectors of formal education is, indeed, not enough.

Credit systems are a powerful tool to improve the recognition of learning, since credits may be transferred or accumulated. Validating prior learning is another tool to improve the recognition and appreciation of learning, but there is confusion between accrediting prior experience and accrediting prior professional experience, as well as between validating learning with a formal qualification or through other methods. For the higher education community, valuing learning is intimately linked with controlling quality.

The certification in one way or another of all knowledge and skills acquired until a certain exit-point could help reduce dropout rates and failure patterns in formal education. Such certification would also give European education a competitive advantage internationally.

**Key Message 5: Ensure access to quality information and advice about learning opportunities**

People need guidance about learning at all stages of their lives, not just on single courses, but also on possible learning combinations. The learner should receive institution-independent educational counselling, first from a general structure, which could be located at local level. Transnational education, which is expanding dramatically in some disciplines and countries, should be included under the guidance structures: the student needs to know especially if a course is accredited or not. Second, the person should receive guidance and help to define the learning project directly from the institution of learning chosen. Careers offices and student counsellors need training to work in a more intensive information managing and guidance context.

**Key Message 6: Provide lifelong learning opportunities as close to learners as possible – in their own communities, supported by ICT, if appropriate**

Citizens need learning close to them in the sense of "attainable" and in the sense of "relevant". The majority of EUA members are willing to invest in ICT as a tool to increase access by people previously excluded from learning - provided that the digital divide between those who have access to the equipment and those who have not is reduced. EUA points out that the institutions cannot bear alone the cost of investing in new technologies.

Lifelong learning can best be delivered through partnership. Many higher education institutions have solid experience of building partnerships for regional development. They have longstanding relationships with organisations in civil society. Upon this basis, they may participate in or even house broadly based centres of lifelong learning meeting the needs of different learners.

**Improved statistics**

The annex to the Memorandum highlights the present inadequacy of statistics on lifelong learning. This is a problem that should indeed be tackled at European level. EUA endorses the approach beginning with further work on definitions of lifelong learning.

**A European Strategy for Lifelong Learning**

The European dimension of the Memorandum is too implicit - a European strategy for lifelong learning should amount to more than comparison of national plans and experiences. Lifelong learning should be a European activity, inspired by common values, even when interpreted in different ways throughout the continent. Each country has its own obstacles to achieving lifelong learning for its citizens, but several problems are common and tackling them together could lead to benchmarking at European level.

European learning systems need to build an identity based on high quality, positive diversity and transparency. Governments and European higher education institutions should promote transnational education in the context of lifelong learning and increase the links between academic and professional education and training.

**Lifelong Learning in Higher Education in Practice**

The input from the EUA members reveals a preoccupation with the daily reality of delivering lifelong learning. Some institutions have an explicit lifelong learning policy; the majority do not. There is a trend emerging to place at the centre of a policy the idea that lifelong learning is either prioritised in the same way as ordinary education, or that it provides the broader framework within which all other education activities are then situated. Those that make lifelong learning part of their regular teaching and learning strategy face the challenge of moving lifelong learning from the margin to the centre and reorganising the institution accordingly. Lifelong learning appears to be a driver for change within higher education institutions. It can cause internal and external walls to come tumbling down.

The most important success factors identified by higher education institutions serious about implementing lifelong learning are that: (1) there has to be an interaction between the different policy levels for lifelong learning, (2) the work has to be placed in a long term perspective and attention given from the beginning to the sustainability of initiatives, including the resource base and quality of the work, (3) there has to be effective partnership. In this sense, the Memorandum identifies the correct "key to success": "to build on a sense of shared responsibility for lifelong learning among all the key actors."

Mary O'Mahony
Expert for EUA

## 3.5. Summary of the Response from EVTA

**Active citizenship and a European social model for Lifelong Learning - some general aspects to a broad discussion in EVTA**

There is no disputing the fact that considerable progress has been made in recent years in moving towards the adoption of a European policy on vocational training. This is primarily thanks to various EU programmes but also to the European structural funds and Community initiatives taken within the framework of the EU Social Fund. Political action in Europe is characterized by the target groups there, namely on the one hand the economy with its businesses, and on the other, people. As the economy is becoming increasingly Europeanised, people would also like to see a social Europe. A social Europe includes vocational training with a European dimension.

The catchword of today is "flexicurity", whereby a high degree of flexibility must not come at the expense of social security. Bringing this about and ensuring that this is not – or is no longer – the case, will not only require a high degree of commitment on the part of politicians and the public sector, but also a redistribution of the resources and investment that have to be channelled into training, continuing training and the gaining of qualifications.

**New basic skills for all**

Whereas the basic qualifications of the past were reading, writing and arithmetic, the basic qualifications of the present and future are IT skills, social skills, foreign languages, creativity, entrepreneurial spirit and technological culture. These are prerequisites for holding one's own on the labour market of the future. Faced with the constantly changing demand for qualifications, any individual, company or, for that matter, whole economy having the wrong vocational training qualifications will find that they have limited scope for improving their competitiveness on the market by having up-to-date and forward-looking qualifications.

Wide-ranging though the means of gaining access to continuing training measures is in the EU Member States, generally speaking it is insufficient. Continuing vocational training is an investment in human resources, also with a view to improving the competitive positions of companies and employees in an invariably rapidly changing market. This would appear to suggest that attempts should be made to improve access to continuing vocational training for special groups of people in the long term, such as the unemployed, people working to fixed-term contracts, women and part-time staff.

Youngsters and young adults with special learning requirements and who are not yet ready to undergo training and need social support as well as assistance in learning constitute a special target group. This calls for a coordinated approach, coherently structured aid and assistance and a clear, transparent range of training courses. Consequently, continuous educational supervision is particularly necessary.

**More investment in human resources**

With all the budgetary constraints of today, there is no alternative but to increase annual per capita investments in human resources. Another thing worth pointing out is that the renewal of the range of ICT-related training offered every nine months or so does benefit the development of the information society, but at the same time exerts tremendous pressure on costs. Whereas a few Member States in the EU have caught up with the USA in terms of both hardware and software, considerable differences between the situations in various regions of the European Union remain.

Qualifications and learning should be regarded by the Member States, industry and companies as well as by individuals as an investment in an ever more rapidly changing market. In this respect, the commitment shown by Member States and public administrations assumes a special model function. Major public-sector investment in the long term is vital if the required improvement in quality is to be attained and ensures that long-term political action is taken, which is in the interests of all concerned.

Quality is indivisible. The substantial framework for private and public measures and their European support requires clear guidelines and legal initiatives. At the same time the question of quality assurance also has to be answered at the regional and sectoral levels as well as in terms of specific target groups.

**Innovation in teaching and learning**

The development and broad-based implementation of effective teaching and learning methods for lifelong learning and 'life wide' learning are important prerequisites for achieving the objectives set out in the Memorandum. However, it would be fatal for the debate to be shortened to new information technologies.

E-learning offers new, extended possibilities and the need for e-learning in Europe is rising. The Council Resolution adopted in Lisbon in March 2000 listed the right measures to be taken. If the formation of a digital divide is to be avoided, then financial efforts and national concepts have to be pooled, for e-learning in the Member States has reached varying stages of development. The introduction of innovative new methods for training measures that lead to qualifications goes hand in hand with the modernisation of developments at corporate level and in the ways in which companies are organised. In fact, new staffing concepts should be utilised to complement corporate development entailing vocational qualifications, possibly in conjunction with training establishments.

Closer cooperation between companies and other establishments providing continuing training could accelerate this process. New forms of learning and the innovation of personalised teaching methods go hand in hand with improved and new forms of cooperation between different seats of learning.

New information technologies such as the World Wide Web, Internet, Multimedia and so forth are synonymous with the development of information and communications technologies and their use. The motto here is "Learn new things in a different way". This raises questions about the influence of new technologies on the social form of learning, the interplay between the different places of learning and the need for the possibility of largely autonomous learning as a key new skill.

Full learning presupposes the use of modern information technologies and the involvement of trainers, teachers and other educational staff whose changing job description is rightly sketched out in the Memorandum. Trainers' qualifications must be geared towards specific tasks in training and continuing training. Nonetheless, the importance of teaching staff and especially of trainers in their various functions and duties in Europe is still underrated. For it is they in particular who should be making an important contribution towards innovation transfer and European identity.

Institutional cooperation on vocational training available by electronic means at European level should be reinforced. Growing commercialism, a lack of transparency and differences in quality are inevitable accompaniments of an otherwise welcome trend towards the manufacture and distribution of electronic learning media to complement conventional resources. The quality and practical use of electronic vocational training courses should be improved by means of the awarding of a European seal of quality by an 'accreditation council'.

**Valuing learning**

Isolated factual knowledge and skills are no longer sufficient to meet the demands of the modern world of work in Europe. The participants' desire for qualifications, on the one hand, and the reorientation of and innovation in vocational training, on the other hand, must also constitute a basis for the reform of validation, certification and examination procedures.

Numerous European initiatives have gone hand in hand with formal learning and its certification. These initiatives are developed to differing extents in the Member States and require broader acceptance and wider dissemination. Even if the Forum has had a positive impact on transparency and further initiatives, the debate

on formal Europe-wide recognition has to be taken up again and conducted anew for it constitutes a major - indeed a decisive – prerequisite for greater mobility in a social Europe.

At the same time, the growing importance of non-formal and informal learning gives rise to the need to answer the question as to their recognition. One important point in the further development of this debate is to alter companies' recruitment behaviour, and public-sector institutions play a key role in this context. Likewise, a contribution could be made towards enhancing individuals' opportunities on the labour market and shoring up firms' competitiveness by incorporating non-formal knowledge and experience.

**Rethinking guidance and counselling**

The need to improve access to general and vocational training for the young generation and also for those generations that are already integrated into the labour and employment markets, means there is a demand for increasingly needs-oriented vocational information, guidance and counselling. The expansion of skills and lifelong learning is inconceivable without the further development of guidance and counselling.

The Internet and globalisation of learning have multiplied the possibilities for gaining information, but at the cost of transparency. Herein lies an important task for vocational guidance and counselling in a European context. The statement in the Memorandum that it remains the responsibility of the public sector to set agreed minimum quality standards and define entitlements is supported insofar as there is a broad consensus that, in principle, training and vocational training are the responsibility of the public sector.

In the past, EURES has made an important contribution in a European context in the area of vocational guidance. In future, stronger links will have to be forged with national services in all regions and with other advisory services. This in turn will necessitate the ongoing expansion of such services as well as their financial support. Meanwhile, existing data banks should be linked up into a European database and extended. The work done by EURES, for example, is still exclusively geared towards the services on offer rather than demand. Education without borders and the provision of education and learning possibilities in another country requires greater European coordination and the examination of legal obstacles to mobility. The Green Book already called for greater mobility but the Member States have failed to take the necessary consequences. A transnational approach also requires fresh consideration of the means by which continuing vocational training, in particular, is funded. At present support is limited to the national training and labour markets.

Cooperation between vocational counsellors and other advisory services (training advisors, technology advisors, local authority educational guidance counsellors, and so on) should be extended. Nowadays, effective, sensible guidance can no longer be limited to selected aspects. The rethinking of vocational guidance and professional orientation also requires the extension, improvement and modernisation of vocational training and continuing vocational training for the advisors.

The backgrounds to and multifaceted links between education, training, the labour market and employment, industry and society also mean that the possibilities for conducting research into the labour market need to be stepped up at national and European levels. Furthermore, a corresponding network should be established at European level and the research involved should be combined with work focussing on vocational training. Supply and demand are matched on the labour market. Contradictory developments are apparent in the relations between qualifications and work. By looking into the issues raised in this connection, research into the labour market can make an important contribution towards policy-related and practical guidance.

**Bringing learning closer to home**

In line with the varying roles played by regions and local authorities in the Member States, the financial commitment cannot be bindingly imposed by legal means. Nonetheless, a great deal needs to be done before the attitude adopted towards learning becomes conducive to achieving these objectives of lifelong learning for all.

In conjunction with the promotion of particularly disadvantaged groups of people requiring special assistance, the depth and breadth of cooperation has to be expanded. The structural and curriculum-based innovations to be tried out in this connection necessitate the establishment and extension of cooperatives and networks at both the local and regional levels. Important actors here include schools and colleges providing general education and vocational training, independent vocational training establishments, public authorities dealing with youth and social affairs, chambers of industry and commerce, industrial associations, companies, trade unions and other sponsors of youth aid and vocational guidance for young people. In this context, a fresh impetus could be given to efforts to boost the motivation of disadvantaged groups of persons, social activities and qualifications.

Learning partnerships in the region and local consortia canal so be built up and/or expanded at transnational level. More use should be made of town partnerships in the Community as cross-border qualification partnerships entailing the use of modern information technologies. This would also constitute a contribution to 'virtual mobility'.

**Making the most of experience gathered by vocational training establishments**

All Member States of the European Union have recognised the need to develop vocational training systems further and engaged in a large number and wide range of activities in this connection. The European Commission provides the necessary framework in a European context. EU's support should be given to a stronger, systematic and innovative approach geared towards improving vocational training systems and investments in human resources. Cross-border training courses will not only transmit new specialist knowledge, convey language skills, and bring the participants into contact with new markets and different systems and cultures, but also give them key future-oriented qualifications such as flexibility, sensitivity and the ability to work as part of a team.

Since the Treaties of Rome, the removal of obstacles to freedom of movement has been one of the main objectives of European construction. European citizens' desire for mobility is increasing all the time. Consequently, fresh efforts should be made to remove any obstacles to mobility. Monetary union will give Europe fresh momentum to an extent that is barely imaginable today. Where training and qualifications are concerned, too, practical and more tangible improvements for European citizens in the context of cooperation on vocational training need to be achieved within a European educational space.

Doing so will at the same time help Europe's citizens to gain a more vivid sense of democracy in Europe. Many of the opinions underlined the link between lifelong learning and the establishment of a European citizenship and democracy. The promotion of learning in connection with cultural diversity and creativity should also be expressed in cooperation with other European institutions, e.g. the Council of Europe. EU enlargement and the role of vocational training in the construction of the European Union are important starting points for future political activity. Once the priorities have been set, the most important thing is to ascertain how they can most suitably be implemented.

A dynamic labour market requires certain standards of vocational training as well as the modern, future-oriented qualification of human resources. These are important prerequisite for innovation and economic development. Employability and employment necessitate constant evolution in the content of courses and qualifications as well as special support for disadvantaged social groups.

Oliver Lübke
Expert for EVTA

### 3.6 Summary of the Response of Solidar/the Platform of European Social NGOs

**Introduction**

The members of the Platform of European Social NGOs were consulted. The Platform consists of over 1700 direct member organisations, associations and other voluntary bodies at local, regional, national and European level representing the interests of civil society. It includes organisations who represent women, older people, people with disabilities, people who are unemployed, migrants, people affected by poverty and homelessness, gays and lesbians, children and families.

Those members most active in contributing to the Consultation were Eurolink Age, Fédération des Femmes aux Foyer, Solidar, European Federation of the Elderly, European Network for the Unemployed, Autism Europe, European Association of Service Providers for People with Disabilities, European Forum of Child Welfare and the Red Cross.

During the consultation, it became clear that most social NGOs working at European level have difficulty in understanding how lifelong learning is directly relevant to their work. They consider lifelong learning as an aim in itself rather than as a tool to help achieve their specific aims. As a result, many had not read the Memorandum. However, this consultation certainly encouraged them to do so.

*In general, the following criticisms were made;*

- Many felt that the **definition of lifelong learning** given in the Memorandum was too broad.

- Certain NGOs felt that not enough emphasis was placed on promoting **social inclusion** in the Memorandum. It seemed to promote the aims of the knowledge society. The content of the first two key messages reinforced this conception.

- Other NGOs felt that more should be done to promote **'informal' learning** as well as learning for personal development.

- Other NGOs felt the Memorandum did nothing to promote **lifelong learning within NGOs** themselves and that key message two ('greater investment in human resources') was more appropriate to companies rather that NGOs.

- Others felt that **simpler language** should be used so that the Memorandum would have as wide an audience as possible.

However, in spite of these comments, many positive recommendations were made for the Communication on Lifelong Learning and useful examples of 'best practice' given.

**Key Message 1: New basic skills for all**

With regard to key message one, the Commission is invited to take the following into consideration in it's Communication.....

- Special **provisions to acquire basic skills** should be made for those who have difficulties acquiring them. 'Basic skills' should not be limited to skills whose acquisition can be tested.
- Greater efforts should be made to encourage the acquisition of the basic skills of **literacy and numeracy.**
- The right for citizens to acquire and update skills throughout life should be secured in the Charter of **Fundamental Rights**.
- Actions should insure that the **acquisition** of basic skills is **possible for all.**

- Actions should insure that '**second chances**' are given to those who have not had the opportunity to acquire basic skills in their formal education.

In conclusion, it was felt that the Communication on Lifelong Learning should promote relevant basic skills not only for those who participate in the knowledge society but for those excluded from society.

**Key Message 2: More investment in human resources**

With regard to key message two, the Commission is invited to take the following points into consideration....

- Human resource development programs should be adapted to employees with **special training needs.**
- Special schemes should be created to give '**on-the-job' training to the unemployed** in companies.
- **Human resource development** programs should not be devoted exclusively to younger workers but should also be offered to **older workers**.
- Greater provisions should be made to insure that greater investment is made in **human resource development programs in NGOs.**

Above all, they called for more human resource development programmes for people with special training needs to insure their active participation in the work force.

**Key Message 3: Innovation in teaching and learning**

The main concerns raised under this key message were that;

- Actions to promote innovation in teaching and learning should **not be limited to promoting e-learning** methods. They drew attention to the fact that computer-based learning was not suitable for a large section of the population since many people do not have access to computers and many cannot use computers due to physical disability..
- Efforts should be made to create **e-learning software** whose **content** is not directly influenced by the company who creates it.
- Steps should be taken to encourage those working in **NGOs to pass on their skills and experience** to people in their local communities by giving informal lectures and seminars in local libraries etc.
- More value should be placed on **learning for personal development.**
- More research on innovation in teaching and learning should be promoted and **indicators** and **benchmarks** developed.
- Measures should be taken to promote greater **trans-national co-operation and exchange** of research.

The Commission is invited to take these points into consideration in its Communication.

**Key Message 4: Valuing learning**

In general, the following recommendations were made to the Commission concerning proposals for key message four...

- Value should be placed on learning **non employment-related** skills.
- Efforts should be made to create learning contexts where the **employed and unemployed can learn together** in order to avoid the feeling among the unemployed of being 'second-class learners'.
- Formal recognition should be given to all informal learning achievements.
- Steps should be taken to tackle the problem of poor self-esteem and poor self-confidence of learners (since this is one of the main obstacles to learning).
- A 'European CV' should include a **credit system to be given for non-formal education achievements** and voluntary and community work.

- Steps should be taken to **inform** those who are responsible for admissions to universities about the **APEL.**

Above all, it was felt that priority should be given to the formal recognition for all types of non-formal learning.

**Key Message 5: Rethinking guidance and counselling**

Under this key message, the main concerns were that;

- **Guidance and counselling** on learning opportunities should be widely **available to all** sectors of society.
- **Special training** should be given to **counsellors** to insure that relevant information is available for those with special learning needs.
- **Guidance** could be given by existing **service providers.**
- Efforts should be made to **encourage people to take the initial steps** to seek guidance. Those working in organisations that have links with the local community could be used for this purpose.

In conclusion, all those surveyed agreed on the need to insure access to quality information and advice about learning opportunities.

The Commission is invited to take these into consideration in its Communication.

**Key Message 6: Bringing learning closer to home**

The following recommendations were made to 'bring learning closer to home'.

- Lifelong learning should be used as a driver for **local and regional regeneration**
- Measures should be taken to **promote home schooling** and intergenerational learning in the home.
- Schemes should be set up to make **computers available to households**, which cannot afford them.
- **Computer training schemes** should be established nationwide to make sure that everyone has the skills to take advantage of the opportunities presented by e-learning.

It was felt that it is important to provide lifelong learning opportunities as close to home as possible and in the home whenever possible.

The Commission is asked to bear these in mind when drafting it's Communication on Lifelong Learning.

Roisin McCabe
Expert contracted by Solidar

## 4. THE KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE WORKSHOPS

The conference "Making lifelong learning a reality – Consultation of civil society" was held in Brussels in September 2001. About 200 people from 25 countries participated in the conference and they represented a wide variety of organisations and associations active in the field of education and training.

The Consultation Platform organised six workshops based on the key messages of the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning and the purpose of those was to find concrete ideas and proposals for the Communication on Lifelong Learning. The key recommendations from the six workshops are presented here.

### 4.1. Workshop 1: New basic skills

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- A broad consensus should be developed on which basic skills have to be promoted and a calendar to do so, by drafting **a framework for basic skills** based on surveys at national and European level. Those surveys should focus on the needs of all those concerned with specific focus on those of the weaker groups themselves. Specific attention will be given to the key role the formal school has to play at all levels in the acquisition of basic skills.
- At all levels (Commission, national or regional or local authorities) efforts should be made to **promote the involvement of non formal education bodies and institutions into formal education projects** A stronger interaction between the non formal sector such as NGOs, (non-governmental organisations) and other members of the civil society should be promoted. Educational partnership involving governmental bodies and organisations of the civil society should thus be promoted. A European placement service enabling civil servants and teachers to be involved in civil society bodies and vice versa could improve to be very useful. This kind of mobility should be funded by the Commission within the main EU programmes.
- Ways have to be found to **involve the learner actively in the process of the definition and the acquisition of new basic skills**. This should receive particular attention with disadvantaged learners. To this effect examples of good practice should be pinpointed which already involve the leaner actively.
- Special attention has to be given to **involve the disadvantaged learner actively** into the setting up, development and evaluation of leaning activities (such as those related to the acquisition of basic skills) she or he is concerned with. Initiatives for those weaker groups should be taken with them and not for them as this is a key element in motivation and is responding to their real needs. To this effect the Commission and the national, regional or local authorities should take specific actions so as to invite associations of the civil society representing those disadvantaged groups to get involved. People working for those associations should receive special training, monitoring and follow-up.
- The Commission, the national, regional and local authorities are invited to set up or improve **information structures** which are as close as possible to the learners, especially to the disadvantaged learners. Those structures should make use of ICT in places, which are easily accessible by the large public such as in supermarkets, railway stations, shopping malls etc.
- The Commission and national, regional or local authorities **should invite universities and research institutes to set up research** into the effect of lifelong learning initiatives promoting the acquisition of new basic skills. Particular research should be carried out in how motivation can be promoted through better-trained educators, better equipment, more innovative pedagogical methods and support structures.
- The Commission has to take specific actions, in co-operation with the ministries of education and employment, to promote lifelong learning initiatives for the acquisition of basic skills through the **Joint actions** scheduled in the main EU education, training and youth programmes. Specific priority areas for lifelong learning and basic skills should be addressed within these programmes.
- The Commission and the eligible countries should include in all educational projects explicitly the **ways in which new basic skills can be acquired and which basic skills are enhanced through the projects** concerned. All projects, at whichever level should have an element of **active citizenship** showing the impact the project has on the local community. The recognition of the basic skills acquired through active

involvement in the local community and in the civil society will also contribute to enhance motivation for learning and for commitment in the civil society.

- The Commission has to include in the EU programs specific **selection criteria**, which lead to select innovative projects. Such selection criteria can be: a partnership composed of partners of the formal and non formal sectors, or a partnership with clear intergenerational learning aspects involving different generations. The active involvement of local authorities, of SME's, of social partners, the explicit references in the projects to which basic skills will be acquired through its activities and the way in which a project is a learning community or learning partnership are other possible selection criteria. The way in which the project builds on relevant research, the ways in which the project support EU and national, regional or local policy concerning the acquisition of basic skills and the way in which the learners are involved at all stages of the projects are also important criteria.
- The Commission should, while promoting European projects, be aware of the fact that the **financial means available** to the non formal organisations and institutions are limited or non-existent. The search for co-funding of projects by non formal education organisations can distract the attention from the educational objectives of the project itself. Sufficient support should hence be given to projects selected with clear criteria.
- The Commission, the national, regional and local authorities are invited **to disseminate good practice through descriptions of case studies.** Those cases should be the basis to train project promoters to enhance the quality and the impact of the projects.
- Specific efforts have to be made **to disseminate** information about the ways in which basic skills can be acquired and are acquired o.a. by giving examples of good practice. Co-operation with media such as television, radio and newspapers is an important element in this. Good and realistic dissemination will definitely enhance the motivation for lifelong learning in general and for basic skills in particular. The key message is to make learning and the importance of learning more visible.
- The Commission should also promote motivation for learning by stimulating **festivals** on lifelong learning such as **learners' weeks**, which exist at national or regional level. A **European day** on lifelong learning could be promoted. **Summer universities** for educators and trainers or counsellors involved in lifelong learning could also enhance dissemination of innovative practice.
- The gradual acquisition of basic skills should be promoted by supporting the development of **a portfolio of skills** and the use of it within formal and non formal education systems. Particular focus should be given to the use of a portfolio of basic skills in dual learning systems, which hold great potential to this effect.
- The Commission should make specific efforts to **involve SME's actively** in lifelong learning projects focusing on the acquisition of basic skills. Those efforts should focus on information to be given to SME and on bringing together partners from formal and non formal educational bodies with SME's to create projects in specific areas. Joint **contacts seminars** could be useful to this effect.
- The Commission is invited to set up **a lifelong learning fund** across the different EU programmes in the field of education, training and youth. Such a fund could be broadened to link up with national, regional or local priorities and sources of funding. It could also link up with private foundations. All of this will facilitate the transferability at different levels and promote consistency, facilitate dissemination and enlarge the impact of the projects and initiatives funded.
- The Communication of the Commission should clearly set the direction, which will be followed in implementing the action plan for lifelong learning by **developing a clear strategy for its implementation.** The plan should be supported by the necessary financial means on the one hand but on the other hand also by the necessary evaluation, monitoring and follow-up structures of projects which can contribute to enhance the quality of the projects.

### 4.2. Workshop 2: More Investment in Human Resources

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

**Investing money**

Member States should increase investment in learners, in learning providers, and in learning facilitators. They should introduce Individual Learning Accounts (ILAs) as a flexible framework within which to motivate and support learners. The European Union (EU) should finance a comparative study of experiences with ILAs to date.

Schemes to invest in the learner originating in the private sector could be compared with schemes introduced in the public sector. At European level, there could be competitive benchmarking between Member States to compare public and private levels of investment across countries. Investment, although articulated at national, regional or local level, should be understood within a common European framework.

A cross-country analysis of investment in learning cities or regions could be useful. Local and regional regeneration programmes should include in their budgets resources for lifelong learning. Companies and education and training institutions should cooperate to develop learning activities jointly, as well as initiatives to promote human resource development in the community. The social benefits of learning should be stressed.

Governments should ensure that there is clear information available to the learner and to any organisation sponsoring the learner on the quality of learning being offered.

The different investors in lifelong learning should pay as much attention to better investment in human resources as to more investment. Barriers to learning should be removed as the corollary to any investment mechanism. Public policy in related areas needs to be coherent with the lifelong learning investment.

**Investing equitably**

Member States should invest to provide a range of opportunities to encourage participation, as well as to provide support for different kinds of learners. When Member States and the EU set their priorities, they should invest in the people furthest from learning opportunities as well as in learning objectives least likely to be supported by other actors, e.g., education for active citizenship.

A transnational study on the relationship between investment in learning and the development of human and social capital could look at the costs of non-participation in lifelong learning, as well as the benefits. Further research into learning needs, the interests of those not participating and the reasons why they are not taking part in lifelong learning is necessary.

There should be more research into which groups of people do not finish education and training, in which type of learning situations, and for which reasons. In parallel, there should be increased investment in support for the learner throughout the learning experience, to help people finish courses and to promote recognition of more learning, thereby reducing wastage.

Motivations for citizens to invest more in their own learning could include more and improved accreditation of different types of learning; higher wages for employees; or awarding people more time. For companies, incentives or rewards for investing in learning can take the form of tax relief, suggested especially for small and medium-sized enterprises.

**Investing time**

Paid or unpaid learning leave should be flexible, well publicised and encouraged. The social partners should increase their investment by agreeing educational leave or workplace learning.

Assistance for nursery schools and day care centres could help alleviate the situation of those with care responsibilities wishing to acquire or to update skills. New forms of cooperation should be encouraged between care centres and services on the one hand and training bodies and companies on the other.

**Investing in learning facilitators**

The importance of all "learning facilitators" – teachers and trainers, as well as professional and volunteer adult educators, community and youth workers, technology professionals, social and health workers, trade union activists, librarians, senior citizens - should receive more recognition and there should be incentives to develop these people's contribution to learning and to the construction of a sense of citizenship.

Action should be taken in all Member States and, where appropriate, at EU level to review initial and in-service teaching training; define new teaching profiles and skills; review remuneration and career development possibilities; promote transfer of experience across different learning contexts; promote exchange of experience in innovative learning and training practices across countries; develop ICT skills and understanding; and create a European reference centre to identify trainers' needs and to support projects to improve their qualifications.

### 4.3. Workshop 3: Innovation in teaching and learning

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The workshop represented the validation of the opinions that had come from the 7 NGO´s involved in the project. Different associations coming from all over Europe come and the participation was a key for the success and good results.

**Summary of the debate:**
Due to the variety of participants (e.g. from Universities, VET Colleges, SME's, student organisations, the European Bishop's conference) the initial statements of the participants covered a lot of different aspects. The more relevant issues are mentioned as follow:

- **Relevance and adaptability of LLL for SME's**

  This related to the need to understand and adapt LLL measures to meet the needs of SMES – many of whom lack the resources to maintain training budgets to upgrade the skills of their workforce. Workforce development programmes must offer flexibility in delivery and support to be effective. There was however general consensus that LLL teaching and learning methodologies should be relevant to all sectors of society and that SME's are not the only special Interest group.

- **Accreditation of non-formal and informal learning**

  The importance of supporting and recognising where and how learning takes place is important and that accreditation / recognition of non formal, informal and formal learning needs to be built in to any LLL strategy. Concept of a need for LLL to assist in development of a toolbox of knowledge to facilitate learners to move across, between and upward throughout their life with the toolbox varying to accommodate the different pathways.

- **Addressing the Educational divide**

  It was recognised that ICT was not a panacea replacing in total traditional methodologies – it was a tool to support learning in bite-sized chunks. One cannot ignore the social environment within which people learn.

Emphasising ICT as a total solution would present a danger of marginalising many learners – LLL must address the educational divide.

Lessons could be learnt from promoting methods and approaches such as (not exclusively) – distance learning, Outreach activity, family learning, business education partnerships and workforce development initiatives – partnerships between large corporate entities and their supply chains (SME's), the development of non traditional learning environments including high street learning centres.

**•Individualisation of learning**

As a result of discussions – the need to design learning around the individual and promote self directed learning were seen as very important – tailoring learning to individual need and providing learning support. Use of ICT, learning materials and tailoring programs for different audiences are key elements in terms of their effectiveness in sharing the responsibility for learning between tutor and learner.

**•Student support systems**

Discussions followed from the individualisation of learning to emphasize the need for effective Learner Support mechanisms – by this is meant sound initial assessment processes to ensure individuals are following the right program(s). This also included – moving from traditional teaching methods to one of facilitating the learning process – a cultural shift for many teachers and tutors.

**•Learning for marginalised groups like farmers**

This issue very much related to tailoring programmes to meet specific needs of different target groups, which enable them to undertake professional and personal development.

**•Motivation and profile of teachers**

In the context of the above discussions – it was recognised that both learner and teacher motivation was crucial to LLL and a wide-ranging discussion took place around this issue. Potential here for the development of LLL Credit transfer processes perhaps building on ECTS but refined to accommodate all in society

**Results of the workshop - Contributions for the Communication on Lifelong Learning**

During the discussion a number of points for the Communication on Lifelong Learning were raised:

- Template for recognition of skills in non-formal and informal learning.
- Partnerships among different players in the communities to enhance motivation of teachers and learners.
- Data base of good practice with critical evaluation.
- New architecture and environment of learning
- Learner cantered methods like open space, group work, problem oriented learning, project learning and an effective learner support system.
- Involving learners in decision making.
- Addressing the educational divide.

The summary of the workshop discussion outlined above whilst not fully addressing key action points does however identify some key elements whereby LLL Communication can promote successful implementation of LLL Strategy.

**Conclusions**

The points below are based on reflections of the authors following the workshop itself.

For instance:

- EU programmes could be used to support a range of key aspects e.g.: Education Business Partnerships in the delivery of LLL through its pilot programmes – encouraging both large and SME's to participate in future pilot initiatives.
- EU programmes should stimulate development of ICT and learning materials to support learning.
- EU programmes should promote the sharing and exchange of good practice building on the European NGO Networks.
- EU programmes that promote the development of effective Learner support mechanisms.
- EU programmes that seek to support and develop staff development programmes to motivate teachers and change the culture of learning.
- EU programmes which bring together the VET sector, business, voluntary agencies and other stakeholders.

## 4.4. Workshop 4:Valuing Learning

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The workshop members agreed with the objective expressed in the Memorandum to 'Significantly improve the ways in which learning participation and outcomes are understood and appreciated, particularly non-formal and informal learning.'

A number of proposals for action were identified. These were: -

**To identify evidence, undertake research and demonstrate the wider benefits of learning**
In addition to improving individual skills and knowledge, learning has wider benefits for the individual, community, economy and society. The links between learning and these wider benefits (including improved health; reduction in crime and poverty; increases in productivity; environmental awareness and civic participation etc) need to be researched and widely disseminated at a European level. Consideration should be given to establishing a structure to undertake this role, which could be a new European Institute of Lifelong Learning or an active network of national centres, which is supported by the European Institutions and NGOs for this and other research, evaluation and dissemination purposes.

**Promoting the value of learning**
Promotion campaigns should be targeted at 'non-learning' groups, communities, enterprises and organisations using evidence of the benefits of learning; examples of relevant good practice; and examples of the diversity of learners, learning organisations and learning opportunities. Evidence to support the campaign messages should be brought together at regional, national and European levels. NGOs, the Social Partners and Learning Providers should be central to the planning and organisation of such campaigns. Successful examples of promoting learning (with enterprises, NGOs and individuals) could be taken from the Year of Lifelong Learning and other national events (such as Adult Learners Weeks). Lifelong learning awards (for individuals and organisations) could be introduced and targets set for increased participation.

**Increasing the visibility and portability of APEL (Accreditation of prior and experiential learning) type approaches.**
A variety of systems to accredit prior non-formal and informal learning (including credit transfer and equivalence systems) already exist in different member states, in different sectors of education, training and employment, serving different purposes. These need to be analysed and assessed to determine the extent to which they; -

- Measure and value non-formal and informal learning across a variety of fields
- Enable individuals to gain access to and progress in formal education systems and/or vocational and employment situations
- Are learner, institution or employment centred
- Recognised as having worth by employers and Higher Education Institutions
- Are flexible, easy to use and understand, beneficial and accessible to a range of learning providers and learners including those from the non-formal sector.

With this information it may be possible to construct a tool kit, which enables more organisations including NGOs to take part in APEL systems. It is important to give recognition to the significance of skills required for citizenship such as teamwork, which are usually not accredited.

**Developing a common European format for Portfolios.**

The concept of a European Portfolio with a common format, which enables individuals to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and experience at work and in all aspects of civil society should be explored and developed. The process of producing evidence for inclusion in a portfolio can provide a unique opportunity for individuals to recognise their own skills and knowledge. A task group should be established which includes strong representation of NGOs, the Social Partners and education and training providers, who are able to consult with the potential beneficiaries of such portfolios and make proposals for future development.

**Improving the transparency and portability of European Qualifications**

An infrastructure is needed to support credit transfer between the sectors of HE, FE and Adult Education. Links should be developed with the non-formal sector and APEL systems. However the anxieties of non-formal providers about being dictated to by traditional formal providers must be overcome, by ensuring equality of representation on the relevant awarding bodies.

Many NGOs have little knowledge of existing European instruments. Publicity and information campaigns should be undertaken to promote the scope, subjects and use of existing European qualifications and processes and also to invite comment on future needs.

The opportunities and problems provided by an increase in migration of asylum seekers and refugees with qualifications gained in non-European countries should be addressed and issues of equivalence explored.

**Measurement and indicators of quality in non-formal and informal learning**

The majority of non-formal and in-formal learning does not result in recognised accreditation. The value, quantity and range of such learning are often hidden. Nonetheless non-formal and informal learning makes a major contribution to the development of individuals' skills and knowledge; community development; work-related competencies and economic progress. The workshop members gave examples of innovative work, which is being undertaken in some member states and by NGOs to develop indicators, which place learners interests at the centre. This is a rich field for investigation and more work is required to develop common forms of measurement of participation (and completion) and indicators of outcomes. Representatives of the range of stakeholders, including NGOs who are advocates for the learners, should be involved in considering present systems of evaluation and how best practice can be developed and implemented at a European level.

**Valuing a Wider Range of Stakeholders**

It is necessary for NGOs to be invited and provided with the opportunities to be involved in the developments required to significantly improving the ways in which learning participation and outcomes are understood and appreciated. This means ensuring on-going NGO representation on fora, task groups and working parties examining and working on these issues. Some core funding will be essential to allow NGO participation, but the returns in terms of exchange of a wider range of good practice, the greater engagement with Civil Society and the learners and potential learners themselves, will result in the outcomes being much more effective.

### 4.5. Workshop 5: Rethinking guidance and counselling

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The European dimension of vocational guidance is still missing. Vocational guidance has to link education systems and labour market. In this field of guidance is an important role of NGOs and other at Member level and EU-level. More cooperation is an important additional "key word" to the action plan:

1. • Social funds activities (financial activities and European support) • structural discussion and decisions: political activities at the local, regional, Member states and European levels, f. e. the ACVT of the Commission should discuss the development of vocational guidance with an European dimension (structure activities) • In addition to the European forum of transparency a European forum of guidance is necessary • Projects of guidance supported by "Leonardo da Vinci", "Socrates", "Equal", f. e. about new methodologies (quality activities).

2. • EURES must offer more, complete and transparent information. Necessary are complete database of job possibilities and learning opportunities. Necessary is an easy electronic access to theses dates and information in addition to personal advice. More coordinated activities in all member states for EURES and for vocational guidance in the Member states are necessary. There is a responsibility for EURES and vocational guidance with a European dimension in all Member states too!

3. • the different possibilities of new technologies have to support the electronic access of guidance in the member states and European wide. • European networking of databanks in conjunction with EURES and beyond • Plans for removing obstacles to mobility • Expansion of the range of information available both in the Member states and at European level and also enhanced possibilities for making use of such information.

4. • Extension, improvement and modernisation of training and continuing training for counsellors at national and European level are necessary.

5. • Creating closer partnerships of guidance in Europe and promotion of transnational networks • Promotion of transnational learning, qualification and guidance partnerships • Promotion of transnational cooperation between vocational training establishments for trainers and the creation of a European reference centre to train trainers to support projects designed to improve trainers´ and counsellors' qualifications • Greater consideration of practically oriented transnational projects implemented by schools or educational bodies in the development, trials and dissemination of new teaching , learning and guidance methods.

6. • Promotional programmes for new and expanded forms of cooperation, especially with respect to people performing supervisory duties • Promotion of expansion of cooperatives and networks at local and regional levels including guidance • Promotion of local and regional education and vocational guidance centres, f. e. with companies, schools, libraries • Promotion of network projects at local, regional, Member states and European level. In these activities has guidance an active role to play.

7. • Other finance streams in the member states and at the European level too. Even in these fields must vocational guidance play an active role. • Investment in human capital by the European investment bank.

8. • Extension of European statistics on vocational training and guidance and expansion of comparative research into vocational training as well as improved research into labour market • Establishment of a database and information bank on innovative teaching, learning and guidance methods at European level.

### 4.6. Workshop 6: Bringing learning closer to home

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Having agreed on a broad definition for 'home', members of workshop six decided that actions could also be taken in the workplace and the local community to bring learning 'closer to home'. Three concrete actions were proposed to;

**1) Connect People in the Home with Local Learning Providers**

In order to create a greater awareness of the learning opportunities that exist, it was proposed to create a spider-web of social links to connect people in the home with local learning providers. Different media such as radio, television, Internet and information leaflets delivered to people's homes could be used to achieve this. This action would be implemented by national governments. They would publish the materials in conjunction with local authorities (who would insure their dissemination). A special 'lifelong learning fund' could be created to finance such activities.

**2) Encourage Learning Partnerships in the Local Community**

Learning activities should be encouraged in all public places and not only in specific learning centres provided for that purpose. 'Learning partnerships' would encourage learning providers to set up in the local community by matching the supply (learning providers) with the necessary resources. The workshop participants felt that learning providers should match the needs of the local community. For example, in communities with large migrant or disadvantaged populations, learning providers should take their needs into consideration. This action would be implemented by a steering group of government ministries, NGOs and public authorities set up at national level. Funding would be provided by the State but local authorities would be responsible for the repartition of these funds.

**3) Encourage Learning in the Workplace**

Two different actions were proposed to promote learning in the workplace. The first was to send people working in the national Ministries of Education into businesses on work-placement. This would provide them with a better understanding of the skills required by the labour market and would be of benefit when developing curricula. An EU program could be set up along the lines of Erasmus to give people the opportunity to do a work placement in a different European country.

It was also suggested that an e-learning portal linking all the best training and human resource development websites could be created for companies. This would provide an invaluable learning resource for employees. A similar site could be created to address the training needs of those working in SMEs. Employers could provide the necessary resources to employees to encourage them to access the website (such as computers, special training periods etc.) This website would be financed by companies who would be the chief beneficiaries. Direct access to this website could also be given in learning centres, youth centres and supermarkets to insure that the unemployed would benefit from it.

## 5. NETWORK PRESENTATIONS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

The Consultation Platform networks are presented in alphabetical order below. You can contact them to receive a full-length copy of the network reports.

**CSR Europe (Corporate Social Responsibility Europe)**

CSR Europe is a business-driven Network whose mission is to help companies achieve profitability, sustainable growth and human progress by placing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the mainstream of business practice. With over 40 company members and 15 National Partners, CSR Europe achieves this objective via the following pathways:

- Serving over 50 000 business people and partners annually through print and online publications, best practices and tools
- Offering business managers learning, benchmarking and tailored capacity building programmes
- Including CSR issues in stakeholder dialogue and focusing particularly on the European Institutions.

**Contact information:**
CSR Europe.
78-80 Rue Defacqz,
1060 Brussels, tel. +32 2 502 83 54
e- mail address: csreurope@csreurope.org
website www.csreurope.org

**The European Association for the Education of Adults (EAEA)**

The EAEA is a transnational, non-profit association whose purpose is to link and represent European organisations, which are directly involved in adult learning. Its primary focus is NGOs whose principal aim is the education of adults, and it works where possible through national co-ordinating bodies for adult learning. Originally known as the European Bureau of Adult Education, it was founded in 1953 by representatives from a number of European countries.

The EAEA's mission is to work for the creation of a learning society. It does this by encouraging the demand for learning by individuals, organisations and communities, and in particular by women and excluded sectors of society. It equally seeks to improve the response of providers of learning opportunities and of local, national and transnational authorities and agencies.

**Contact information:**
EAEA,
8 Rue J. Stevensstraat,
1000 Brussels. Tel. +32 2 513 52 05
e-mail address: eaea-main@eaea.org
website: www.eaea.org

**The European Forum of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (EfVET)**

Efvet is a unique European-wide professional association, which has been created by and for providers of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in all European countries. Its mission is to champion and enrich technical and vocational education and training through a transnational co-operation by building a pan-European network of institutions and practitioners, which will:

- promote quality and innovation in Technical and Vocational Education and Training throughout Europe,

- develop collaboration, mutual co-operation and sharing of good practice,
- give colleges a platform of influence in European TVET policy

Developed with the support of the European Commission and the European Institute of Education and Social Policy, EFVET is the only transnational organisation of this type for TVET.

**Contact information:**
website: www.efvet.org
e-mail address to Peter Hodgson: phodgson@nortcoll.ac.uk
e-mail address to Wolfgang Stutzmann: Wolfgang.Stutzmann@t-online.de

**The European University Association (EUA)**

The European University Association, as the representative organisation of both the European universities and the national rectors' conferences, is the main voice of the higher education community in Europe. EUA's mission is to promote the development of a coherent system of European higher education and research, through active support and guidance to its members as autonomous institutions in their development of the quality of teaching, learning and research and in enhancing their contributions to society. EUA's strategy and objectives are to develop consensus on:

- a European higher education and research identity based on the shared values of institutional autonomy, education as a social good and research as the foundation for learning.
- the compatibility of European higher education structures through commonly accepted norms in order to consolidate the role of higher education in the knowledge society, be it in terms of innovation or dissemination.
- convergence of a European higher education area and the cohesion of research networks to strengthen further the sector's attractiveness to stakeholders in Europe and beyond.

**Contact information:**
EUA – European University Association (www.unige.ch/eua)
10, rue du Conseil Général CH – 1211 Genève 4
Tél: +41 22 329 22 51
e-mail address: info@eua.unige.ch

Aarlenstraat 39-41. B1000 Brussels
Tel. +32 2 230 55 44
e-mail address: info@eua.be

**The European Vocational Training Association (EVTA)**

Our association is made up of 15 organisations whose make-up differs: centralized – decentralized, public – private, dedicated to vocational training only – covering both employment and vocational training. We have set up EVTA because we want to be an integral part of Europe together with our public, we can operate better a more economically together and we have more expertise together than our own. With the support from EVTA it is easier to gather information and have access to it through a network. Our joint actions include:

- The exchange of information and experiences in the field of advising and the pooling of efforts to better the quality and efficiency of Vocational Training
- The sharing of methods and tools through theme-based working groups: advising, certification, quality etc.
- The exchange of trainers and trainees to enhance the diffusion of joint experiences through a better knowledge of each other
- The answer to Community invitations to tender for which the on-line organisation is the strengthening of an efficient and sustainable action

**Contact information:**
EVTA, Rue de la Loi 93 – 97, 1040 Brussels
Tel. +32 2 644 5891
e-mail address: info@evta.net
website: www.evta.net

**Solidar / The European Platform of Social NGOs**

SOLIDAR is an independent European alliance of Non-governmental organisations involved in social care, development, humanitarian aid and lifelong learning, which have links with the trade union and social democratic parties. Solidar was formally set up in Germany in 1951 with the name 'International Workers Aid'. In 1995 it was renamed SOLIDAR and moved to Brussels. Solidar member agencies are involved in over 90 countries worldwide where they collaborate with grass root organisations and trade unions.

Solidar has NGO representatives from 16 countries, 12 of which are in the EU. The International Confederation of Trade Unions is a founding and observing member. Soldar maintains fraternal relations with the Socialist International and the European Trade Union Confederation. Solidar is recognised by the European Union and the International Labour Organisation. Solidar is an observer to the Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the EU and a member of the Platform of European Social NGOs.

**Contact information:**
Solidar, Rue de Commerce 22,
B-1000, Brussels
Tel. ++ 32 2.500.1020
e-mail address: solidar@skynet.be
website: www.solidar.org

The Consultation Platform worked in association with:

**The European Youth Forum**

The European Youth Forum is an international organisation, established by national youth councils and international non-governmental youth organisations. It has incorporated the Youth Forum of the European Union (YFEU), which acts as a bridge between the European Youth Forum and the institutions of the European Union.

The European Youth Forum endeavours to serve the interests of young people from all over Europe, promoting their active participation in the construction of a common Europe and seeking to involve young people in shaping a Europe based on the values of Human Rights, democracy and mutual understanding.

Young people and youth organisations have an active role to play in ensuring the revival and evolution of democracy by demanding the recognition of social, cultural, political and economic rights and responsibilities, and by acting as a complement to the political, representative, democratic process. Therefore, young people and youth organisations are willing and able partners of the political decision-makers, governments and administrations.

**Contact information:**
European Youth Forum,
Rue Joseph II straat 120,
1000 Bruxelles/Brussel
Tel. +32-2 230 64 90
e-mail address: youthforum@youthforum.org
website: www.youthforum.org

European Commission
Directorate-General for Education and Culture
Rue de la Loi, 200 / Wetstraat, 200
B-1049 Bruxelles / Brussel
Tel.: 32-(0)2 299 11 11
E-mail: eac-info@cec.eu.int
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/education/life/index.html

Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs
Rue de la Loi, 200 / Wetstraat, 200
B-1049 Bruxelles / Brussel
Tel.: 32-(0)2 299 11 11
E-mail: empl-info@cec.eu.int
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/dgs/employment_social/index_en.htm

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